



The ABC's of FASD:

**What is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
and How Can We Prevent It?**

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Evaluations

Please visit
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Your feedback is invaluable to this program.

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What Is FAS? What is ARND?

FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome)

A specific pattern of birth defects caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol.

ARND (Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder)

Developmental disabilities and cognitive impairments that adversely affecting learning and behavior

Babies with FASD



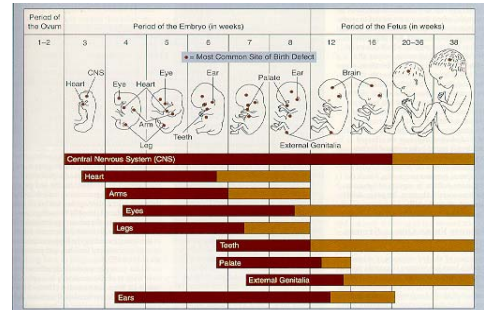
FAS and Related Terms

- Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE) (not used currently)
- Alcohol-Related Birth Defects (ARBD)
- Fetal Alcohol Brain Damage (seldom used)
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

The breadth of growth, structural, developmental, and social disabilities experienced among individuals with prenatal exposures to the human teratogen, ethyl alcohol.

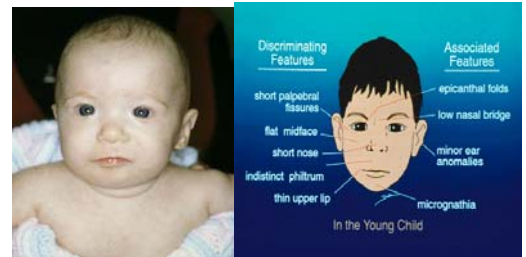
Variable: Gestational Timing



FAS: A Medical Diagnosis

- IOM criteria (1996)
- History of maternal alcohol abuse
- Growth deficiency (height or weight <10th centile)
- Characteristic facial manifestations
 - Short palpebral fissures
 - Smooth philtrum/thin upper vermillion
- Central nervous system abnormalities
 - Structural (e.g., small head, abnormal MRI)
 - Functional (e.g., learning disability)

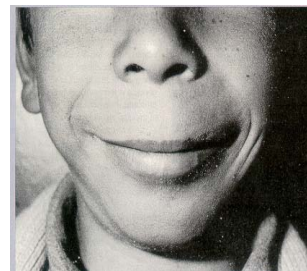
Facial Characteristics: FAS



Short Palpebral Fissures



Smooth Philtrum, Thin Upper Lip



FAS and the Brain



Cerebral cortex
Hippocampus and cerebellum
Corpus callosum

Neurocognitive Issue

Prosody

- The ability to understand the affective tone or emotion, in the voice
- Useful in figuring out the emotional state or intention of the other person

Classroom/Learning application

- Understanding other's facial cues
- Reading emotions correctly
- Integral to social interactions

Problems of Individuals with FASD

- Possible mental health issues
- Slowed nerve conduction*
- Developmental delay
- Attention deficits
- Increased activity
- Increased stress reactivity
- Sleep disturbances

Problems of Individuals with FASD

- Learning difficulties
- Decreased visual focus
- Decreased/increased response to noise or stimulation
- Delayed speech development
- Possible mental retardation

Behavior

- Hyperactivity (or 'impulsivity')
- Out-of-control behaviors
- Strong reaction to touch, sound, etc.
- Do not know how to soothe themselves
- Higher risk for getting into serious trouble

Social Skills



- Often socially inappropriate
- Excessively friendly and fearless or very shy
- Excessively influenced by peers
- Often adopt the behavior of those around them
- May not pick up on non-verbal communication or social norms

Family Relationships



- Family gatherings may be difficult
- Extended family may not understand FASD
- Parents wonder how to explain FASD to siblings or other children
- Siblings are impacted by the condition

Transitioning Into Adulthood

- Challenges of adolescence
- Supporting adolescents
- Sexuality
- Talking about FASD with your child/adolescent



Support During Adolescence

- Provide more supervision and for a longer period of time
- Rehearse correct behavior for risky situations
- Locate programs that are structured and well supervised
- Incorporate life-skills training early
- Allow ample time to discuss life changes
- Provide boundaries

Sexuality



- Watch for early sexual interest
- Be proactive rather than reactive
- Adolescents may be unable (not unwilling) to control impulses
- Adolescents may have reduced inhibitions
- Social naïveté can lead to victimization

Services/Supports That May Assist Children with FASD

- Family support, including respite care
- Child care
- Education – early intervention, preschool, school aged special education
- Vocational & transition services
- Other basic services

Advocacy Means...



- Teaching people about your child's condition and needs
- Being persistent in requesting a service or intervention
- Learning about your child's rights to getting appropriate education, quality health care, and other needs
- Working to improve systems that provide services to those with FASD

Ways to Advocate in Your Child's School

- Educate yourself about laws affecting your child
- Educate school personnel about how FASD affects performance and behavior
- Don't give up advocating for the services your child needs!



NYS FASD Prevention Initiative

- Funded by federal SAMHSA FASD Center for Excellence in November 2004
- Purpose: to reduce FASD births by eliminating consumption of alcohol by pregnant women
- Phase I (11/04-8/05): Create statewide FASD Task Force, develop Needs Assessment, and create a Strategic Plan
- Phase 2 (9/05-8/09): Implement FASD Interventions into service delivery system(s), evaluate and document efforts, create policies/programs to support FASD prevention
- Administered by the NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services (OASAS)

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Resources

- SAMHSA FASD Center for Excellence
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention FAS Prevention Team: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
- National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS): These sites link to many other Web sites
- **www.oasas.state.ny.us**

For More Information on FASD contact:

Margo B. Singer 518-457-6206

**(OASAS)
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and Substance Abuse Services
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For More Information on FASD contact:

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